

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces any and all prior claim lists.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-16 (canceled).

Claim 17 (currently amended). A method for preparing a coated food product comprising:

(a) coating the food product in a first step with a layer of a first liquid mixture comprising toppings with a size greater than 0.5 mm and an oil or fat;

(b) coating the coated food product obtained in step (a) in a second step with a layer of a second liquid mixture consisting essentially of ~~comprising~~:

5 to 40 wt.% of a binder selected from the group consisting of maltodextrins having a dextrin equivalent in the range of 0.1 to 10, dextrin, edible polymers, arabic gum, guar gum and cellulose derivatives;

5 to 40 wt.% of a co-binder selected from the group consisting of monosaccharides, disaccharides, and mixtures thereof; and

20 to 90 wt.% water; and

(c) drying the coated food product obtained in step (b); and wherein in step (b) the weight ratio in the second liquid mixture of binder to co-binder is of from 5:1 to more than 1:1.

Claim 18 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein the coated food product obtained in step (a) is dried.

Claim 19 (currently amended). The method according to claim 17, wherein the food product is selected from the group consisting of oven baked food products, deep fried crisps, extruded products, dry roasted nuts and general dry food products having a water content of less than 5 percent by weight, calculated on the total weight of said general dry food product, said general dry food product being made of materials selected from the group consisting of cereals, ~~preferably wheat and corn, potato and rice.~~

Claim 20 (previously presented). The method of claim 19, wherein the oven baked food product is selected from the group consisting of biscuits, cookies, pretzels, crackers, and snacks.

Claim 21 (previously presented). The method of claim 20, wherein the oven baked food product is pretzels.

Claim 22 (previously presented). The method according to claim 19, wherein the extruded products are deep fried after extrusion.

Claims 24-44 canceled.

Claim 45 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein the oil or fat is selected from the group consisting of edible and vegetable oils.

Claim 46 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein the edible polymers are selected from the group consisting of proteins, starches and polysaccharides.

Claim 47 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein the first liquid mixture comprising a topping and an oil or fat comprises 5.0 to 60.0 percent by weight of topping and 40.0 to 95.0 percent by weight of the oil or fat, based on the total weight of the mixture.

Claim 48 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein the weight ratio of binder to co-binder in the second liquid mixture is between 3:1 to 1.1:1.

Claim 49 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein in step (c) the food product is dried to a moisture content of not more than about 7 %.

Claim 50 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein the topping has an average size of 0.5 mm with more than 50% of the topping particles with a size greater than or equal to 1 mm.

Claim 51 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein the second liquid mixture further comprises a flavor enhancer.

Claim 52 (previously presented). The method according to claim 51, wherein the flavor enhancer is a yeast.

Claim 53 (currently amended). A method for preparing a coated food product comprising:

(a) coating the food product in a first step with a layer of an oil or fat and the simultaneous or subsequent coating of said product with a layer of toppings with a size greater than 0.5 mm;

(b) coating the coated food product obtained in step (a) in a second step with a layer of a second liquid mixture consisting essentially of ~~comprising~~:

5 to 40 wt.% of a binder selected from the group consisting of maltodextrins having a dextrin equivalent in the range of 0.1 to 10, dextrin, edible polymers, arabic gum, guar gum and cellulose derivatives;

5 to 40 wt.% of a co-binder selected from the group consisting of monosaccharides, disaccharides, and mixtures thereof; and

20 to 90 wt.% water; and

(c) drying the coated food product obtained in step (b); and wherein in step (b) the weight ratio in the second liquid mixture of binder to co-binder is of from 5:1 to more than 1:1.

Claim 54 (previously presented). The method according to claim 53, wherein the coated food product obtained in step (a) is dried.

Claim 55 (currently amended). The method according to claim 53, wherein the food product is selected from the group consisting of oven baked food products, deep fried crisps, extruded products, dry roasted nuts and general dry food products having a water content of less than 5 percent by weight, calculated on the total weight of said general dry food product, said general dry food product being made of materials selected from the group consisting of cereals, ~~preferably wheat and corn, potato and rice.~~

Claim 56 (previously presented). The method of claim 55, wherein the oven baked food product is selected from the group consisting of biscuits, cookies, pretzels, crackers, and snacks.

Claim 57 (previously presented). The method of claim 56, wherein the oven baked food product are pretzels.

Claim 58 (previously presented). The method according to claim 53, wherein the extruded products are deep fried after extrusion.

Claim 59 (previously presented). The method according to claim 53, wherein the oil or the fat is selected from the group consisting of edible fats and vegetable oils.

Claim 60 (previously presented). The method according to claim 53, wherein the edible polymers are selected from the group consisting of proteins, starches and polysaccharides.

Claim 61 (previously presented). The method according to claim 53, wherein the first liquid mixture comprising a topping and an oil or fat comprises 5.0 to 60.0 percent by weight of topping and 40.0 to 95.0 percent by weight of the oil or fat, based on the total weight of the mixture.

Claim 62 (previously presented). The method according to claim 53, wherein the weight ratio of binder to co-binder in the second liquid mixture is between 3:1 to 1.1:1.

Claim 63 (previously presented). The method according to claim 53, wherein in step (c) the food product is dried to a moisture content of not more than about 7 %.

Claim 64 (previously presented). The method according to claim 53, wherein the topping has an average size of 0.5 mm with more than 50% of the topping particles with a size greater than or equal to 1 mm.

Claim 65 (previously presented). The method according to claim 53, wherein the second liquid mixture further comprises a flavor enhancer.

Claim 66 (previously presented). The method according to claim 65, wherein the enhancer is a yeast.

Claim 67 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein said toppings have a size from 0.5 mm to 2 mm.

Claim 68 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein said toppings have a size from 0.8 mm to 2 mm.

Claim 69 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein said toppings have a size from 1 mm to 2 mm.

Claim 70 (previously presented). The method according to claim 32, wherein said toppings have a size from 0.5 mm to 2 mm.

Claim 71 (previously presented). The method according to claim 32, wherein said toppings have a size from 0.8 mm to 2 mm.

Claim 72 (previously presented). The method according to claim 32, wherein said toppings have a size from 0.8 mm to 2 mm.

Claim 73 (previously presented). The method according to claim 17, wherein in step (c) the food product is dried to a moisture content of not more than about 3%.

Claim 74 (previously presented). The method according to claim 32, wherein in step (c) the food product is dried to a moisture content of not more than about 3%.

Claim 75 (new) The method according to claim 19, wherein said cereals are selected from the group consisting of wheat and corn, potato and rice cereals.

Claim 76 (new) The method according to claim 55, wherein said cereals are selected from the group consisting of wheat and corn, potato and rice cereals.